1:Herskovits & Herskovits E-5 (1928-1929) 1934
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8
Saramacca

439 "I heard that you are buying things we make, as you did last year in my village. I have come with balata from my uncle, and I brought a stool to sell. Would you like to see it?"

And so Bayo brought us his stool. It was not well carved. Indeed, compared with even the least skilled carvings on benches and combs and trays and food-stirring paddles, the workmanship was crude. But one does not refuse a proffered article bruskly, and we sat down to talk with him about it.

531 322 It was Bayo who gave us our first insight into the meaning of Bush Negro designs, gave us our first information about this, as about so many other customs and practices. What is carved on the wood which the men work with such care has significance, and carries meaningful symbols which the Bush Negro is unwilling to reveal. That there might be symbolism in the art we had before suspected, but usually, when we asked, we heard the skillful evasions of which the Bush Negro is master. He did not know. Only the carver himself could say, but the carver was away or long dead. Or we would hear that it was carving, that it was carved to beautify it, that it was of an in-and-out design. Or, with carefully pointing finger that indicated the ornamentation, the Bush Negro would say, "This is wood."

531 So we talked to Bayo about his stool, expecting to hear one of the usual replies. But this time and without any urging we heard what we had so long wondered about. "Look," he said, tracing out the lines of the interwoven pattern, "this is a man, this a woman. This is her head, those her breasts, this her womb. Here are his head, his arms, his legs. We call this *womi-ko-muye*—man-and-woman. Here are the children which they will make," and his hands traced another series of designs on the top of the stool.

439 789 We bought his stool, and he stayed and talked of many things. Did we want to buy an *obia*—a charm? One day he would like to become an obia man. Already he could make obias which protect the wearer when he walks on the water.

1: Herskovits & Herskovits E-5 (1928-1929) 1934
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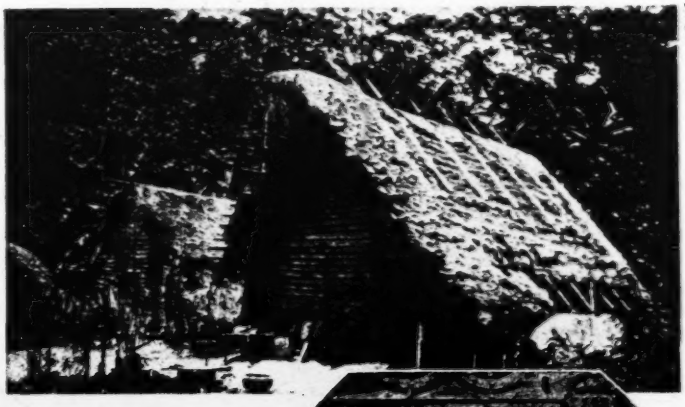
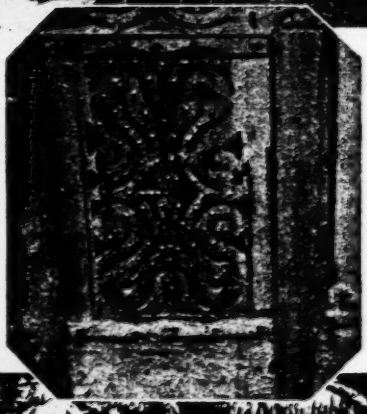


Dwelling houses.



Carved door of a man's house (*right*).

A *gudu wosu*—man's personal house.

[Facing P. 130]

1: Herskovits & Herskovits E-5 (1928-1929) 1934
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family. The children of the second wife belong to the family of the second wife. A woman calls her husband's other wife by the name of kambosa. Do you know what kambosa means?" he asked, laughing. "*Kambosa*—the woman who makes trouble for me. So, you see, we people of the bush learned from our ancestors to give each wife her own house, where she might live with her own children."

But not alone the woman needed to have a house of her own. The man, too, built a house for himself. In it he stored his possessions. It was his sanctuary. No woman might enter it. On the carving of its door, a man lavished all his love of ornamentation, all his artistry.

"A man likes to have his own house for his possessions," explained Kasanya. "If he is a rich man, it is better that his wives do not know how much he has. You know what women are. They always ask for presents. But if a man is not rich, then it is better still that his wives do not know it. If they know, they will make life hard for him with nagging. They will talk of leaving him. And all the village will know, too."

In this house, then, which a man built for his wife, the children were reared. Sometimes, it is true, if the harvests were poor or the father had met with ill luck, the mother's brothers would come for the children, for children are the ones to carry on the line. It is through them that clan rank and material goods are inherited.

But if all went well with the father, then the attachments of the household were the closest, and they continued even after death. For the household was not entirely disrupted after the death of a parent. Unless the one who died had been a sorcerer, a leper, or a madman, the house where he lived was not torn down.

"When a man dies," Kasanya said, "the wife goes on living in the house, once it has been purified. If a woman dies, then the man keeps on living there."

"What of the children?" we asked. "What becomes of them?"

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village. A household was not confined to one building only, but few who were not men of rank and means had more than three. One was for the woman and her children, another for storing the crops, and the third was the man's treasure house, where women might not come. It was like the matter of wives. Only men of position could afford more than one. But if a man had two wives and both lived in his village, then perhaps five huts would bear a design identified with him on the carved side posts which outlined the low doorway. This design would recur in the various carvings he had made for his women—it was his crest. And though a man from another village, who was not related to him, might like it, and liking it copy it, this practice would be socially frowned upon.

A village quarter, however, did not contain only dwelling places, and storehouses, and men's treasure houses. Certain families also had in their part of the village an enclosed shrine for the family gods. If in a given family a powerful Vodu, or snake god, had come to an ancestress and had in a dream, or in a seizure, or through a revelation made to an obia man, chosen her as his *'asi*—his priestess or medium—then with this disclosure came the instructions for the place of locating a house of worship to that Vodu, and the type of house it was to be. Such a shrine, once erected, would be kept in the quarter, and worshiped by the members of that family. Sometimes in front of a dwelling hut, a low enclosure, the size of a small kennel, would stand a little to the side of the door. This was a house to Toné, the river spirit. In one such house lived a woman who had a great Toné god. She had the gift of prophecy. When the men gathered for a council meeting in the village of the Granman, then she, too, would sometimes be bidden to come and sit with the men, though, being a woman, she could never speak at council meetings.

"Touch her skin," the other women said, pointing out this albino woman, "and you will have your desires fulfilled."

In each quarter, too, there was an open house where the women did their cooking, and perhaps a platform or two,

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to be admired for their artistry, but there also for ceremonial purposes which were never divulged. When one of these benches was later taken down to show the magic of paper which, placed on the top of a carving and rubbed with black crayon, reproduced the design beneath, the Granman looked startled, and then ordered that it be replaced. Nor were other rubbings allowed.

On both sides of these massed benches were many objects which could barely be distinguished in the half darkness of the house. There were guns and canisters, there were a few native brooms, and several wrapped parcels. There was also an apinti drum on which the gods were addressed. Not even at Ma'lobbi, where the chief, a famous carver, showed us many remarkable products of his art, did we see designs worked with the fine, sure lines or the beauty of individual motifs such as were traced on this apinti. The carving was in relief and covered the entire surface of the drum, which stood about three feet high, curving outwards from the top, and resting on a narrow circular base which raised its body about six inches from the ground. It was covered with a deerskin that use and exposure to the atmosphere had stained unevenly to shades of amber.

Facing these carvings was the door which, itself of wood, swung on wooden hinges of native fashioning. In relief appeared the Earth Mother, and surrounding her were the symbols of fertility. No man, not even the Granman himself, dared speak her name in this council house. At trials, when oaths were taken, she might be appealed to, but to call her idly would bring down her wrath on the Granman's clan, and, perhaps not stopping there, since the council house was of all the clans, she would revenge herself upon all the people of the Saramacca River. The carving was more beautiful than on the apinti which stood against the opposite wall. The greatest artist on the river had made it.

"That man had the gods, ya-hai," the men said, when we talked of the Granman's carvings.

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they told us, though never willing to name the villages where they stood, whose walls were most elaborately ornamented with symbols marked in red and black and white, the three sacred colors which appeared on the stools and which the men used for painting their faces and bodies for the dances. On the upper river we had been told that these shrines were in the villages below, and on the lower river it was always intimated that it was up above where the great shrines stood. We had been told of stools which were whitened with sacred pemba, and blackened with soot in the *Fa'aka Pau* houses—the houses of the ancestral spirits—and of the covered whitened vessels which were in the Vodu and Aguku houses, the shrines for the bush and snake deities, placed there for the spirits when they chose to animate them.

So we found it in this house dedicated to the spirits of the bush.

The hut was narrow and long, with walls of woven palm, and a floor made of hard smooth clay into which bare feet had nevertheless worn grooves. To one side of the door stood a drum of the type called *tumao*—the long drum. It was cylindrical, and narrowed but slightly toward the bottom. White clay had once covered it, but now there were irregular lines of white marking the cracks in the wood.

On the other side of the door, against the same wall, lay several large balls of clay. These the old woman was keeping for the obia pots she would make from time to time. Among the Negroes of the town as well as in the bush, these black pots, made by women of the bush, were held to have great magical potency.

"I never make too many pots at once," the old woman said. "I make them for myself as I need them and for the young people of the family." A woman who had not passed her period of childbearing could not make them. "Obia pots are things for old, old women. I cannot tell you about making them."

Leaving these lumps of clay, the woman led us farther into the enclosure, until we stood in front of a raised altar

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"The openings in the wall there," she explained, when we asked her about the two squares cut into the wall behind the altar, "are for all things that fly. In this place they must come and go as they like. Bats come here, and insects of all kinds, and when they want to go back to the bush, they must be able to go as they like. That is the wish of the gods. So they told us long ago."

6

We were led from house to house. The gods had spoken. We were friends, and as friends who came not to harm, we were given the hospitality of friendship. There were other shrines, but we did not have to ask about them. They were pointed out to us with the other sights of the village.

The closed low hut near the Apuku shrine we had entered was to the river god Toné. It was a very small enclosure, and before it was a plant which covered the low entrance. It belonged, we were told, to an albino woman who was possessed by Toné. But she was not in the village now. Farther down the path was a larger house, another shrine. This had a piece of iron over the door and, when we asked about it, the girls who were following us ran, and the men merely said that it was the place of the Kromanti obia and passed on.

As we continued on our way, each woman was anxious not to have us slight the house her man had built her or fail to admire the carvings that were inserted into the weave of the palm walls. The huts were swept clean—the cleanliness of the entire village was even more striking than that of others we had visited—and but for a few stools, which were brought out for the strangers while they spoke with the old people who lived in the quarter, they were entirely bare. In every house, however, there was sure to be a shelf, large or small, or several shelves, on which stood prized food trays with carvings which covered both inner and outer surfaces. Combs and food stirrers were taken down and shown us, and the calabash dishes made by the women

1:Herskovits & Herskovits E-5 (1928-1929) 1934
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353 themselves, and the blade-like pieces of gourd which they
531 used for spoons, and which bore the same symbols as the
415 dishes.

"Our men make fine things here in the true, true
462 Saramacca," Dida said when we entered her quarter, and
531 sat in her house. "Look at the carvings I have."

Her body was still white with pemba. Her manner was still a little vague.

"Did you dance this morning?"

"Ai."

"We heard the agida drum play when we were in the
776 council house of the Granman."

787 "Ai, Kesekia is a big god. When he comes, his voice is strong."

But she showed no willingness to talk, and we could tell by the repeated twitching of her body that she had still to dance to her god. Leaving her we continued up the path toward houses we had not yet visited. The white man, with a man who was guiding him and the bassia from Asindopo Lantiwe, walked ahead, while the children crowded about the white woman who was giving them safety pins which they at once put in their hair.

778 "There is the Vodu house," said the man who acted as
346 guide, and he led the way through the low doorway into the hut.

Inside, though smaller than the shrine to the gods of the bush, it differed from it but little. It had the same clay floor, the same raised altar on which stood stools washed in white clay, and several covered, whitened vessels, an image, and the round balls of clay.

"May I go closer and look at the image there?"

"Yes, go."

[350] The stools resembled those in ordinary use, but whatever design they may have had was obscured by the white clay which covered them. The vessels were not unlike those in

[415] the other shrine we had visited or those which rested on the heads of village gods which stood under low, roofed-over shelters on the main village paths. Turning, the white man

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THE ARTIST OF MA'LOBBI

As we walked toward the chief's house we looked about us, seeing again the evidence that here at Ma'lobbi there were men who knew how to carve wood, seeing why it was that our paddlers had spoken of it as a place for fine work.

"Ai, at Ma'lobbi they are good carvers."

Here was a house with its doorposts elaborately carved; there a beautifully worked rice tray, lying where it had been left by the woman who owned it, until she should need it later in the day for winnowing her rice; farther along a great bench stood, with the designs cut through in a fluid progression over top and sides.

The captain was in the lower portion of his two-story house when we entered. Several of the older men, who had been present at our earlier visit and who remembered our gifts of tobacco, came to join us, as the news of our arrival spread through the village. Soon the women were standing about, motioning to the white woman to come with them.

The house in which the captain received us was larger and more imposing than the others in the village. It was his *gadu-wosu*—his treasure house. Its lower portion, where we sat in conversation with him, was where he worked. Above, where none of his wives might enter, his wealth was stored. Here he kept the pieces he had carved, and from here drew from time to time the presents he gave his wives. Here lay the wealth which his nephews would inherit when he died. But below, in the partially open shelter, was his workshop where he fashioned rough logs into stools and paddles, combs and food stirrers, trays and canoe seats, and all manner of objects which he and his women used in their daily routine.

All about the walls hung tools. There were machetes, whose sharp blades showed a reflection of fire from the sun which slanted on the wall. We had never seen so many of these bush knives on display, nor, for that matter, such an array of tools anywhere on this river. From projecting boards or nails driven into posts hung several compasses, their hinged arms sharp-pointed, so that the craftsman might describe the perfect circles on the wood he carved.

1:Herskovits & Herskovits E-5 (1928-1929) 1934
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This they had learned from the whites long ago, and now everywhere on the river compasses were seen, or carvings which showed their use. The machete, the small sharp knives which lay about here on the work-table, the compass, and sand made up any Bush Negro carver's tools. But here at Ma'lobbi in this workshop of the captain were tools from the white man's city, collected by himself on his journeys down to the government office to receive his yearly allowance, or by his men who had been to the French shore and learned of the ways of the outside world. There was a plane to make the blade of a paddle smooth as the skin of a child, and there were two others in addition to this one, we were assured, in the treasure house of the upper story. Hammers, too, were useful for making boats, and even for smaller carvings like benches. There was also a bit and auger, though we were never convinced that the captain himself had ever put it to its more prosaic uses.

"I have many more up there," said the captain, pointing to the upper story. "I like them. If a man likes his tools, then they help him in his carvings. As he sees with his eyes, so they cut. I have always liked my tools, white man. I have spent much time with them."

A young man sat to one side shaving down a block of wood with a knife which he held.

"He is not carving," the captain said, following our eyes. "He is making a piece for this," he explained, indicating a plane. "Now is not the time for carving. There is too much to be done. This is the time for cutting wood, for taking the rafts down the river, for making boats, for bleeding rubber trees for the white man, and for hunting game. When the great rains come, then men sit about and carve."

As he spoke our eyes traveled to the various carvings which stood about the workshop. In one corner leaned a paddle which caught our attention because of its darkened color, and the patina which long use had given it, so that it seemed made of ebony. Against another wall were several stools, all richly ornamented with carvings, while beside us,

1: Herskovits & Herskovits E-5 (1928-1929) 1934
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8
Saramacca

and so close that our hands, moving about to find a rest, touched its top, and sounded an involuntary rhythm, was an apinti drum. We exclaimed at its beauty, for in form and carving it rivaled the one we had admired in the council house of Granman Yankuso, and we were determined to try to buy it. But we turned our conversation to other things. A stranger in this bush soon learns from the Bush Negroes to broach an important request gently, remembering the cautioning proverb spoken by the chameleon.

We talked of carving, of the white man's coming back some year when the rains were heavy to sit by and watch the men make paddles and benches, so that he might learn, as children learn.

The captain was politely skeptical. It took a Saramacca hand to do this work. But he smiled, "Ma kye, if you have the gods anything is possible."

"That's a fine paddle in the corner."

He brought it out, and we admired it. Would he sell it to us?

"You must ask its owner."

"Didn't you make it, captain?"

"Yes, but it is not mine to sell. I gave it to my wife." He would see, however, if she wanted to sell it. He would himself go and call her.

As he went, he gave us the paddle that we might examine it. We ran our hands over the smooth top, the design, the beveled blade. It was not so tall as the paddles used by the men, nor was its blade so broad as those used in steering the great boats through the rapids. In form, it was quite different from the round-bladed type used by the Indians of the region, for it was slender and came to a sharp point, and at the other end the carving formed a crutch-shaped hold into which the hand fitted.

We studied this carving. Parts of the design had meaning for us because of their realistic treatment. The motifs of others were recognizable to us from explanations we had been given of other carvings. But there were still details

1:Herskovits & Herskovits E-5 (1928-1929) 1934
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The greater part of these carvings men made for women, and it was a rare woman who did not take pride in the excellence of the carvings given her, though often it must have been the pride in something which had traditional value, for it would be false to assume that among any people are all men equally endowed with creativeness and all women with sensitive appreciation of what is created.

As among so many peoples, two or three types of art were to be found. There was the same sex division in the art of these people as existed in all other aspects of life, and the men were the wood carvers. The sharpest division in the art of the men was that between the secular and the religious. The religious art was crude. A block of wood, roughly shaped, with several cuts to indicate a face, perhaps a break in the line to represent the neck, and a few more strokes in the wood to differentiate the upper part of the woman's body, and there stood an ancestral image, or a village god. Often white clay was added to this, and sometimes alternate stripes of white and red, or white, red, and black, but when seen on a village path underneath a low open shelter, what color there once was had become weathered to a dull gray. The sacred art also included the charms called obias, worn on the neck, and about the upper arm, or wrist, or below the knee, or at the ankle. Many of these made pleasing ornaments. The white fiber dipped in red clay became a deep golden brown as the sun paled the crimson, and there would be the added color of a finger's length of blue and orange parrot feather, fastened inside the woven fiber square, and extending below the fringe of the weave. Into this woven square cowries might be sewn, two facing each other, or three, or four.

There was also the art of modeling, but this was so secret and so specialized that we were assured that not even all Bush Negroes knew of its existence, and modeled objects appeared only in the most important of the shrines.

With the religious art might also perhaps be grouped the red and white striped crooked sticks of the Kromanti

2:Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8

his much-loved ornamentation. Leg-bands of cotton cloth are frequently worn by both sexes, and where wire can be secured it is fashioned into arm or leg coils and paraded proudly. Many necklaces and bracelets are used because they constitute magic amulets against evil spirits. Our own bracelets and necklaces can probably be traced back to this same origin. The hair is another means of personal decoration, and therefore it is always dressed with deliberation. Carefully made partings divide the black skull into geometrical designs.

Despite the scanty nature of their clothing, the Djukas are quite modest, and never expose themselves. If a bahkra does, they avert their heads. It is a curious reflection on civilized morality that the almost naked blacks possess a large amount of dignified restraint, while the uncomfortably clothed white man is shameless in his nudity.

Here and there inside the dark huts can be seen bits of extraordinary wood carving. These are not crude utensils; every stirring-paddle or comb is a work of art worthy of a place in a museum, designed and executed in a way that is far from "primitive." The only way to acquire these objects is to bargain for them in Dutch money or tobacco, or cheap knick-knacks. Among the more distant villages money is use-

2:Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8
Boni

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Youth of the Boni Tribe Playing Dance Music on the "Apenti" or Signal Drum. Marowyne River, French Guiana. Drum Carved from a Single Section of Tree Trunk.

Kahn-Granger Collection, American Museum of Natural History

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2: Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8
Paramacca

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Drums from the Paramacca Tribe. The larger one is the Nanda, the small one the Baboula.

Kahn-Granger Collection, American Museum of Natural History

[Facing p.60]

2:Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8
Aucaner

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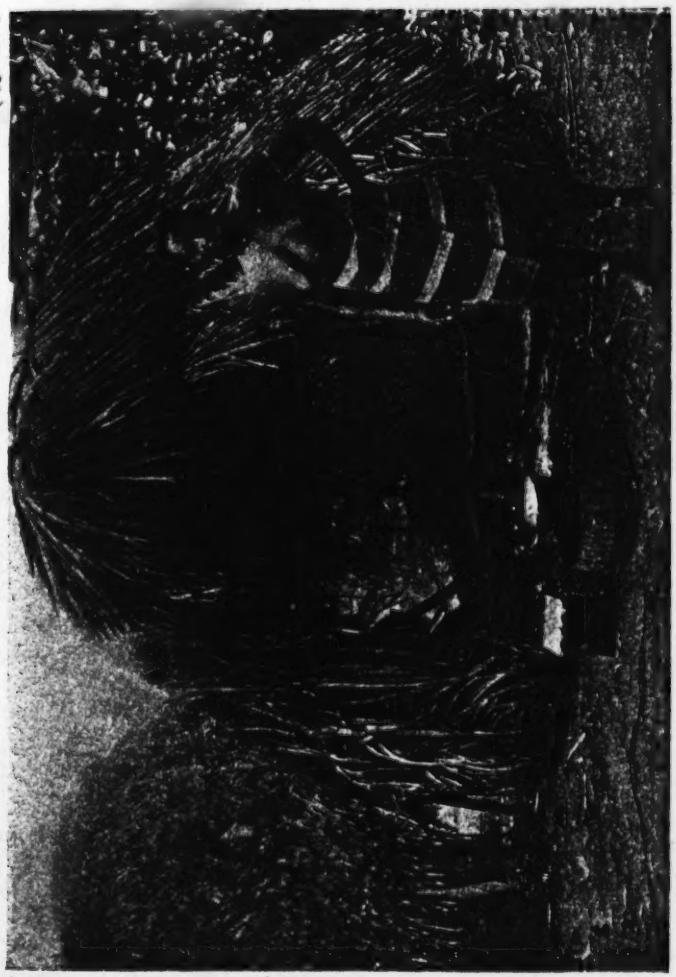

An Aucaner Mother. Note the Cassava Cakes Cooking Inside the Kitchen.
Photo by Curiel

[Facing p. 64]

2:Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8
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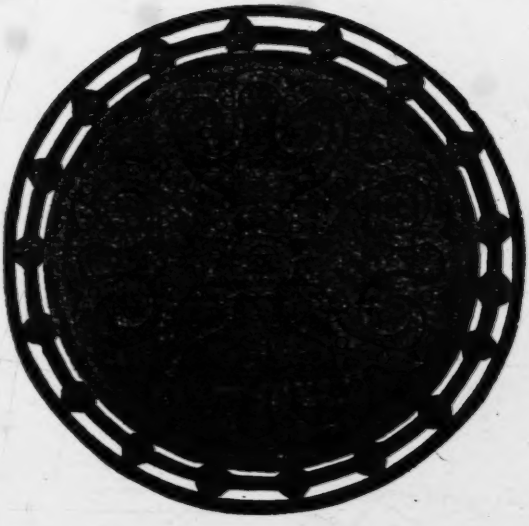

Tray Three Feet in Diameter Carved from a Single Section of Tree Trunk. *Boni Tribe,* French Guiana. Four Stylized Human Figures Showing Arms and Trunk.
Kahn-Granger Collection, American Museum of Natural History

[Facing p. 72]

2: Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8
Saramaccaner

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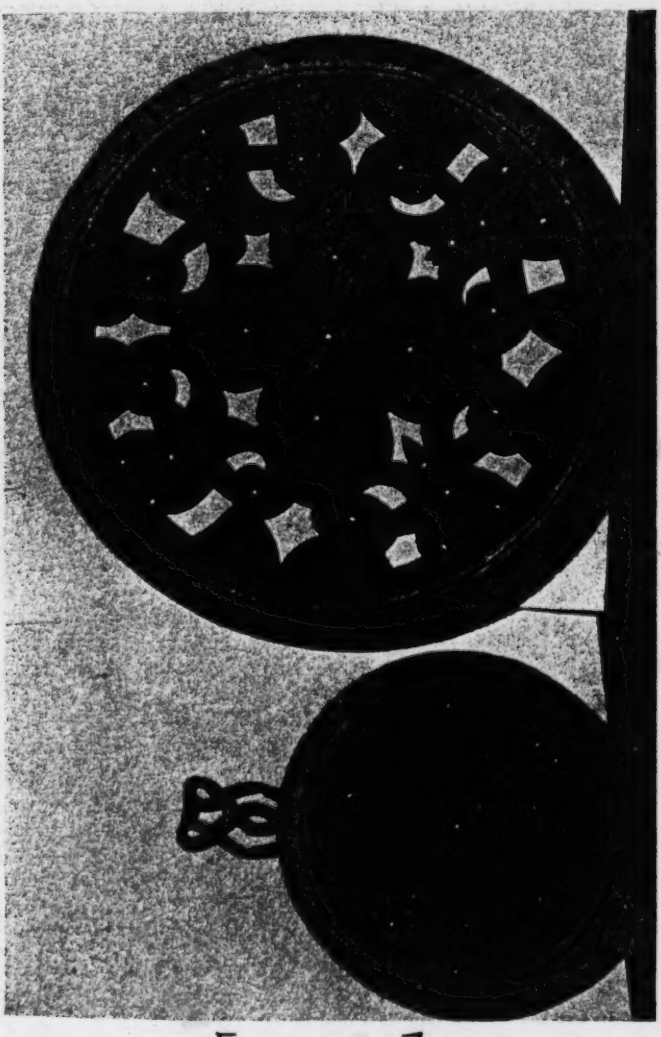

Carved Wooden Trays for Carrying Food. *Saramaccaner Tribe*, Upper Surinam River. The Central Figure on the Smaller Tray is That of a Dancing Woman.
Kahn-Granger Collection, American Museum of Natural History

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2: Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8
Saramaccaner

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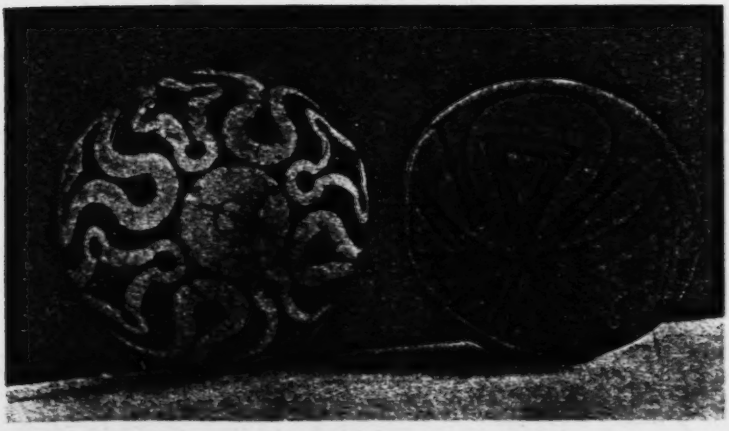

Carved Calabash Gourds Used as Plates. *Saramaccaner Tribe*, Upper Surinam River.

Kahn-Granger Collection, American Museum of Natural History. Photo by Herbert Heller

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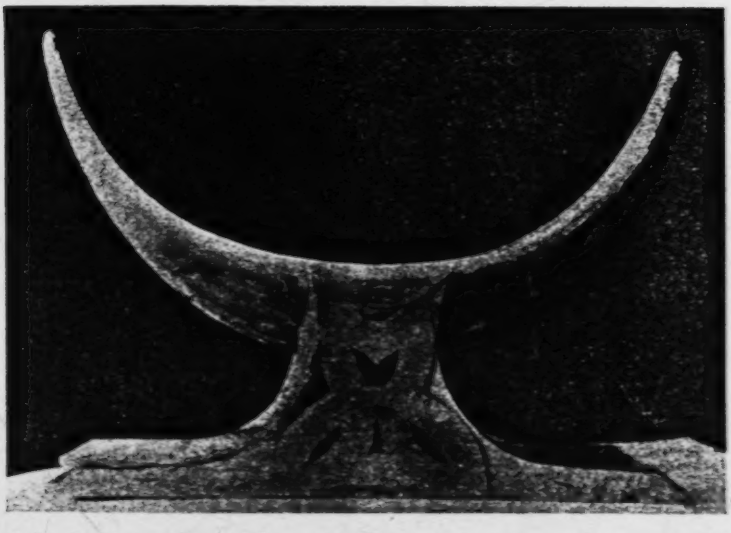

A Bush Negro Stool, Three Feet Long, Known as "Lebba Bangi" (Moon Stool), Taking Its Name from the Moon in the Crescent Phase. *Saramaccaner Tribe*. Stools of almost the identical nature are found in the Ashanti region of West Africa. This motif is probably one of the most striking West African Survivals.

Photo by Herbert Heller

[Facing p. 80]

2:Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8
Aucaner

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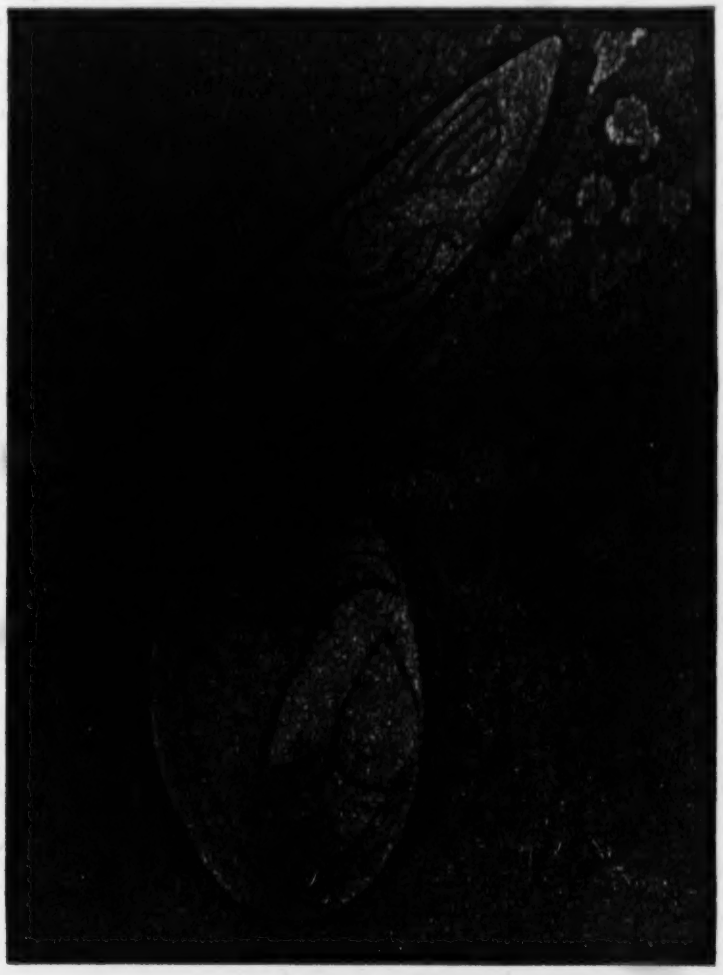

Plate and Spoon of Carved Calabash Gourd. *Aucaner Tribe.*
Kahn-Granger Collection, American Museum of Natural History

[Facing p. 88]

2:Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8

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Bush Negro Men Visiting Paramaribo, the Capital of Dutch Guiana.

Photo by Klein

[Facing p. 98]

2: Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8
Aucaner
Saramaccaner
Boni

In general appearance and culture the Aucaners vary little from the other large tribe, the Saramaccaners.

The art motifs and their treatment as displayed on the Aucaner wood carvings as a rule differ from those of the Saramaccaners. On the other hand, some of the pieces were found to be practically identical.

The Aucaner talkee-talkee also differs from that of the Saramaccaners, the former being more like the speech of the Town Negroes. The Aucaners have no deepee-talkee or odo as have the Saramaccaners, but they have a dialect known as *Koropina* where a *p* or an *m* is spoken before the vowels in a word for the purpose of confusing strangers. A similar custom is prevalent among the Negroes of Curaçao, Dutch West Indies.

The dress of the Aucaners is the same as that of the Saramaccaners, excepting that they affect more often the breast-cloth, the *wasapangye*, and the head-cloth, the *maara*.

Among the Aucaners the toga garment is called the *yembaá*, while it is called a camisa by the Saramaccaners. The barrier of palm leaves is called *chifanga* by the Aucaners and *ezang pau* by the Saramaccaners.

The system of food taboos and general culture are the same. There is no mother-in-law taboo among either the Aucaners or the Saramaccaner tribe.

The Boni tribe, which consists of about 900 people, is descended from escaped slaves who crossed the Marowyne River into French Guiana and who were allowed to remain there unmolested by the French authorities. This is the only

2: Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8

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An Aid to Busy Mothers

[Facing p. 105]

2:Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8
Saramaccaner

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Bush Negroes of the Saramaccaner Tribe, Upper Surinam River.

Photo by Klein

[Facing p. 110]

2:Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8

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A Bush Negro Mother on the Lower Saramacca River.

[Facing p. 112]

2:Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8
Surinaccaner

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Bush Negro Women of the Saramaccaner Tribe.
Photo by Klein

[Facing p. 122]

2:Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8
Saramaccaner

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Combs and Pot Stirrers with Chains. Each is Carved from One Piece of Wood. *Saramaccaner Tribe*, Upper Surinam River.

Kahn-Granger Collection, American Museum of Natural History. Photo by Herbert Hellie

[Facing p. 124]

2:Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8
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Bush Negro Man and Women of the Aucaner Tribe from the Tapanahoni River, Dutch Guiana. Note scar tissue decoration on face and chest of woman at left. The central figure is "Moi-Man" (Nice Fellow), one of Dr. Kahn's guides.

[Facing p. 128]

2:Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8
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A Bush Negro Woman of the Boni Tribe with a Carved Wooden Flail Used Instead of a Wringer, for Cloth. The right hand holds a tin containing an infusion of tobacco leaf and water.

[Facing p. 156]

2:Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
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Bush Negro Men of the Aucaner Tribe. Note scar tissue decoration on faces. Cottica River, Dutch Guiana.
Photo by Klein

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2:Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8
Aucaner

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"Cow Fie" (Cow Fly), Six Feet Tall, and "Moi-Man" (Nice Fellow),
Two Expert Canoemen from the Upper Tapanahoni River.
Aucaner Tribe.

[Facing p. 166]

2:Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8
Aucaner

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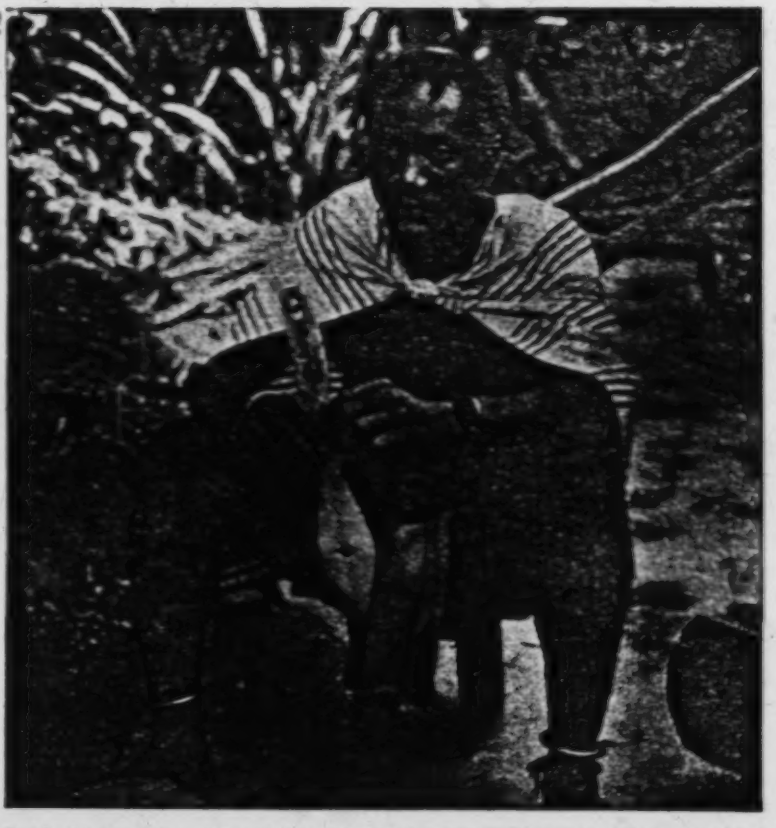

Bush Negro Man, "Amehkimoi" (Makes Nice Things), with a Carved and Inlaid Pot Stirrer Which He Has Just Completed for His Wife. *Aucáner Tribe,* Upper Cormotibo River, Dutch Guiana.

[Facing p. 172]

2:Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8

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Carved Wooden Board for Mashing Peanuts.
Kahn-Granger Collection, American Museum of Natural History

[Facing p. 176]

2:Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8

531 In the combs, paddles, and other pieces of wood carv-
322 ing illustrated in this book, the most casual observer will discern a great beauty of form and design. The sense of line, the feeling for balance, combined with elaborate conception and execution, compare well with the productions of the highly sophisticated artists of our urban civilization. All of the wood carvings, collectively known as *sanni* or *timbeh*, follow certain traditional patterns. The individual motifs, however, are products of the individual imagination, and, judging by the variety and originality of the designs shown herewith, that imagination is evidently quite fertile.

[462] All the carving is done by men. There is a ceremonial significance to this. These wooden pieces are tokens of love.

Love in the jungle is not the etherealized sentiment portrayed by Victorian novelists. When a man and woman
[531] want each other the satisfaction of their desire is easy and immediate. The people are largely promiscuous among themselves. Under such conditions the existence of romantic sentiments is an impossibility.

822 Individual preference does, of course, exist, and this im-
322 plies courtship. A man may want a woman who does not
431 want him, and this implies wooing. The wooing consists in presenting the woman with specimens of sanni. Thus, every piece of wood carving is a token of love and affection, presented by a Bush Negro to his woman. The woman who accepts sanni from a suitor accepts his love along with it. The man naturally stores up a quantity of sanni in expecta-

2:Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8
Saramaccaner

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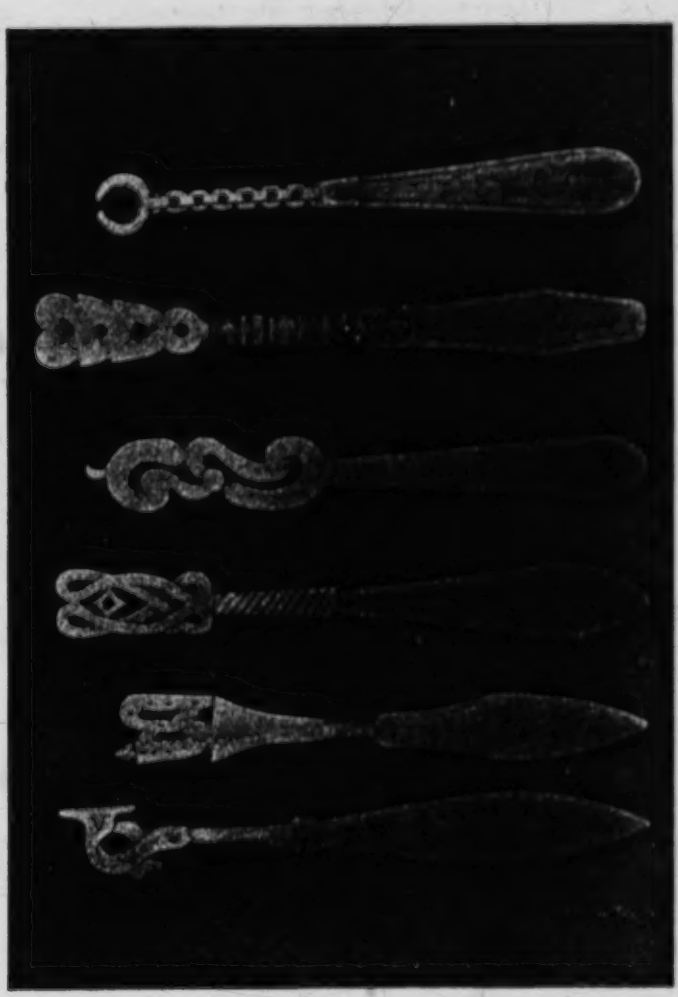

Pot Sticks. *Saramaccaner Tribe.*
Kahn-Granger Collection, American Museum of Natural History

[Facing p. 194]

2:Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8

number of pieces. The first of these is the snake motif. It takes the form of serpentine coils and twists, fancifully involuted and superimposed. The same general design is also interpreted as a liana motif, referring to the twisted tendrils of the jungle vines, convoluted and snarled. The second most important is the chain motif, an attempt to duplicate the links of iron chains.

The vulva motif is commonly found, and is consciously employed as a love symbol. The natives have no hesitation in interpreting this design as referring to the female genitalia; it is impressed on articles as a symbol of desire. The bill-bird, or toucan, provides another motif that can be recognized on a variety of pieces. Another West African survival is the bone motif, for the human scapula is frequently seen conventionalized on calabash objects. A few of the white man's objects also furnish themes for wood carvings, such as the rifle stock.

Other motifs are entirely without symbolic intention, and represent symmetry and proportion only. The cross-hatch and notch motifs are African in origin, and can be found on West African objects. Other details of execution vary widely without especial significance. The tines of the combs may be rounded or square. The food paddles may have two handles and one blade, or two blades and one handle. The size of the pieces varies considerably, from small combs a few inches long to the great six-foot canoe paddles. Outside of the vulva and penis motifs there is little erotic symbolism.

A peculiarity of Aucaner wood carvings is the system of

/10 cont./

574 The politeness shown toward a guest springs from the idea that unknowingly one of them might easily take the very piece that the important person wished to have, and although no comment would be made on this, it could nonetheless happen that this would trouble the guest for whom they cherish special respect, 818 or that he would thereby consider himself insulted. It is particularly to old age that they pay great respect.

Chapter VI

Household and Agricultural Implements

412 The Bush Negroes mainly use adzes in order to hew their [322] corjalen or canoes out of trees partially burned out beforehand; [424] furthermore, they use planes and chisels in order to work their [531] (usually cedarwood) (1) stools and pareh or paddles (2). They are

1. Cedrela odorata L.

2. Hand oar.

especially fond of having these carved with many figures. For them the machete is an indispensable tool that they always carry around and use as a chopping knife, sword, and knife, indeed, even to cut splinters or thorns out of the foot with the tip. They use field axes or hatchets to cut down the bush in order to lay out their small cultivation grounds and to work the wood that they float by rafts and sell.

562 The women possess, aside from a machete or knife, also 412 mattocks with which they keep their lands and the place near the [324] dwelling neat; they make brooms from the pina palm racemes or [413] from rice ears bound in sheaves. They like to have scissors, needles, and pins, while for knitting they use a pointed and bent nail.

413 They spin their sewing thread from cotton with a certain [283] tool which they call kekè; they also have a round, wooden tool [286] called sepoe, with which they very nicely and muchly /11/ make

G:Hurault--77a K-5 (1948-1958) 1961 598 Bush Negroes 598 Boni

/facing p. 96/

533

Fig 13. Boni paddles.

At the right, for comparison, a Saramaka paddle --

[184]

6:Hurault--107a K-5 (1946-1958) 1961 SRS Bush Negroes SRS
Boni

/facing p. 76/

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Fig. 15. House type of the Refugee Blacks; Loabi village (Djuka of the Upper Tapanahoni).

/163 cont./

	for Bonaville	for Assi-Dju
Fintiman Kélément Doni Aubi	sons and grandsons of Bénili (Dju)	3 men over 20 years old
4 young men of the Kotika lineage		4 to 5 adolescents
1 —	Dip. I —	
2 —	Lapé —	
1 —	Papaliman —	
2 —	Puti —	

They furnished a total of two weeks of work but each one collected for himself about 15 kilograms of dry fish.

The buchiman, riding in five large canoes decorated with multicolored oriflammes, approach the Bonaville wharf where all the young people of the village are massed, the men armed with their guns, the women brandishing banners made of brand-new canvas. The hurrahs resound, punctuated by hundreds of shots. In an atmosphere of enthusiasm the buchiman make their entrance into the village and go to report on their mission to the council assembled under the mortuary shed. According to custom, this council is improvised at the last moment by the elders who are there, without attention to origin, and does not involve any definite authority.

Four baskets of dried fish are put down at the edge of the shed, for the mourning-lifting festival, then each one goes to get and arrange in his house a big personal basketful.

The fish intended for the festival are distributed among the women charged with preparing them.

About 2:00 P.M. the elders are assembled in the western part of the shed; in the eastern part, the near relatives of the dead for whom mourning will be lifted lament.

Several apinti drums are brought and placed laterally.

/211 cont./

153 791 789 534 special drum is used, about two meters long and very narrow, devoid of any decoration, which is called lĩŋga dɔ̃ or papa dɔ̃.

787 [562] To call on her gita, the possessed woman (they are almost always women) stands, puts on a piece of cloth which she always keeps nearby and always takes along with her when she travels: this is the garment of the god; it consists of a sort of scarf crossed in front; then she throws white clay, pemba, on her feet from right to left and left to right while invoking the god. Possession is almost immediate. One sees the woman's eyes roll up and her expression become haggard. The god does not cover himself entirely with pemba like the Kumẽnti, he makes himself a sort of headband on the forehead with white clay.

787 788 639 [782] He begins with an invocation to Masa Gadu said in ordinary language.

"Masa gadu, gi mi pimisi, beka mi na pikin nẽŋge; ala sani di mi ɔ taki, na yu mu gi mi kaakiti, beka na yu abi mi kaakiti, da mi yɛ̃falu gi yu."

"Masa Gadu, I implore you, for I am a humble creature; (in) all that I am going to say, it is you who will give me strength, for my strength is in you; I shall exalt you."

787 788 [148] Next come formulas of welcome to those present, which are the exact translation of the formulas of greeting of everyday life, then songs, all in the Papa language. After about a quarter of an hour, it enters a hut and sits down, answering in ordinary language the questions of those present, always in a singing tone.

787 Possession by Papa gadu does not have the bestial character of possession by Kumẽnti; outside of the dances, it does not involve brutish gestures or bizarre acts; the possessed woman hums softly in a shrill voice, moving with graceful gestures.

[531] /212/ Sometimes she draws strange signs on the huts; the Boni state that that is a kind of writing, that other possessed people

787 /212 cont./
531 can read these messages; but we have not turned up any precise evidence on this subject (1).

1. These signs are very little systematized and have no relation whatever with the symbolic designs which figure in certain rituals of possession, especially in Dahomey and Haiti. It is permitted to see in them a simple likeness.

787 The Papa gadu are chiefly consulted to ask them to re-
[255] veal the cause of misfortunes that happen. One of them is not
[253] asked to cure an illness unless the interrogation reveals that it brought it on.

776 The worship of the Papa gadu snake gods makes a strong
648 impression on the West Indian Creoles who maintain regular relations with the Refugee Blacks. Most consider it as diabolical
[782] in nature and disapprove of it, but if the presence of an "adder"
[171] (anaconda snake) is noted in a neighboring creek, and if at the same time misfortunes occur, it happens that a Creole may go to ask the Refugee Blacks to practice rites to mollify
[778] the vengeance of the god. We have happened to catch sight of, hidden in a copse behind the habitation of a gold miner, a small altar decorated with blue and red pennants, the usual place of worship of the Papa gadu.

755 Observation in Boniville, November, 1952.
[787] An Asisi woman, Tini, comes to Boniville to consult her adoptive daughter Pamasa, about 35 years old, who is possessed by a Papa gadu named Adawa. Féni, 15 years old,
[164] Tini's son, has been sick for several days (fever, eruption all over the body). When someone comes to get us, the god has already entered into Pamasa, has sat down in a hut, and